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TOLMIE

INDIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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ON

Rice Sept 17th "Kachum" for

UTILIZATION

—OF THE—

Indians of British Columbia

BY WILLIAM FRASER TOLMIE.

VICTORIA, B. C.

MUNROE MILLER, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER, JOHNSON STREET.

1885.

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DEDICATION.

To the humane, religious people of all denominations in British North America, in hope of their earnest co-operation, is dedicated this appeal to the present Dominion Government of Canada, in behalf of the poor Indians of British Columbia, who, for lack of long delayed and much needed instruction in various branches of knowledge, are leading comparatively idle, vicious lives, and are greatly decreasing in number. In regard to only one Reservation, did the Superintendent's Report for 1883, state that births exceed deaths. That reserve comprised the Lower Fraser and the Mainland Coast, as far north as Bute Inlet. On it, the religious teaching is principally Roman Catholic, and in part Methodist.

WM. FRASER TOLMIE.

UTILIZATION OF THE INDIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Some one in America has written a book entitled *The Century of Dishonor*, bearing on the bygone neglect and maltreatment of the aboriginal race, within the far reaching bounds of the United States.

On the contrary, as compared with Western Canada, or the Dominion, west of the Rockies, great and well-judged expenditure with successful issue therefrom has, throughout its possessions on the Pacific slope, for the last twenty years, been the action of the United States government. Farther on this will to some extent, be shown.

Truly does dishonor attach to the successive dominional governments for callous neglect of their Indians in their Pacific province (B. C.), during, to speak within moderate bounds, the last twelve years.


How is this to be remedied?

The Dominion Ministry at Ottawa, as well as our own Ministry at Victoria, are public servants, bound under penalty of dismissal, to conduct all public business "according to the well understood wishes of the people."

If, throughout the Dominion then, a strong desire is manifested to have the poor Indians of this Pacific province variously instructed so as to fit them for useful citizenship, the business of so preparing them will soon be zealously undertaken by those, the Dominion Ministry, on whom that duty so solemnly devolves. It is, by our fellow Canadians, the right-minded of the New Brunswickers, Nova Scotians, Quebeckers and Ontarians that this sentiment should

be felt, and strongly exhibited in an effectual way. Surely there will be some display of it by British Columbians, whose country the "Indian problem" so immediately concerns.

At a late meeting in Boston, Mass., of friends of the Indian it was remarked by a General Armstrong, himself principal of the important and flourishing Indian school of Hampton, Virginia, *that the only way of handling the Indian question lies in awakening a public sentiment, the influence of which is felt at Washington.* Italics mine.

 For "Washington," substituting "Ottawa," how perfectly the foregoing applies.

An article in a late *Boston Commonwealth*, headed "The Indian Character," has the following passage.—"The primal cause of the "century of dishonor" in our history was the want of reverential appreciation of the natural Indian character, and the low prevalent idea of their being more savage than the Europeans, whom they always at first welcomed with generous hospitality, and almost worshipful respect, and did not begin to fight, till driven to it, by the encroachments and cruelty of the whites."

The books on the early condition of the Pacific Slope from 1805-6 downwards, present many instances of the exhibition of extreme kindness by Indians to whites in distress. Of their almost worshipful feelings towards whites, one well authenticated case, occurring early in the century, was told me years ago. Two unusually tall and stalwart men, free trappers, coming amongst a western tribe, were treated with great respect, being taken for "children of the sun." This tribe had never previously, in all likelihood seen white men. The men in question were

both Canadians, one of them bearing the same historic surname as does the present Premier of the Dominion.

In the southwestern and western countries of the United States, where Indians, used to Buffalo hunting, have yet to be rationed; the wholesome spur of necessity is wisely applied. To the native, most laboring for the production of his own food by tillage, of the soil, is the most liberal ration given. The slothful and idle are more scantily supplied. The reports prove however that in some quarters such stinting has been too generally applied. As in Europe, so in America, the most fermenting troublesome classes are first attended to. The wild nomad of the North West had regardless of cost, to be conciliated and restrained, by use of every needful appliance, mounted police inclusive, ere white settlement of the great prairie countries of Midland, Canada, could be ventured on.

The, as a rule peaceable, well disposed redmen of Western Canada, our province (B. C.) intermixed with, and helping the whites, have, although long since taught religion by devoted R. C. Missionaries, been for twelve years deprived of their just, and most important inheritance, to wit, the vitally needed teachings in secular matters, already bestowed on Indians, *elsewhere, throughout the Dominion*, and so liberally afforded in the United States, comparatively close by. Indians of this province going south to pick hops, comment at home, on the comparatively great size of American Indian Reservations, and on the praiseworthy attention to Indian teachings, and other requirements, at the various reservations, in Washington Territory, U. S., whither business or curiosity leads them.

Time, surely, that the attention of the Dominion Government should be directed, to what Columbia greatly needs for her so long neglected Indians.

The official report of the Dominion Indian Department, ending 31 Dec. 1882, states that the Indian population of Manitoba, and the North West, numbering 37,044 had that year expended on them \$1,099,736.80, which averages \$29.69, for each one, young or old.

During the same year, the Indian population of British Columbia, approximately numbering 35,052 had an appropriation of \$40,333.75, or \$1.15 each. Of their grant, \$17,582.65, went for surveys, and establishing of reservations, without buildings, not yet needed, until the Indians have their inheritance, *acquired when the whites took possession of their country.* The Midland Canadian Indian had in 1882, for his present and prospective-benefit, nearly 2,600 per cent. more per head, than was then received, by his very mildly complaining western brother.

The Weekly Montreal *Gazette* of February 27, 1885, after, in a becomingly rejoicing strain, detailing the breaking up of land by thousands of acres, and the production of grain and roots by tens of thousands of bushels, in midland Canada ^{by} the Buffalo ~~by~~ hunting aborigines of less than a decade ago, concludes thus :

"It is evident, therefore, that as long as the interests of the native races are considered as they have hitherto been, our authorities are not likely to have upon their hands that dreadful burden of responsibility which our neighbors understand by the Indian problem."

If the writer in the *Gazette* would, as attentively as I have, look over and re-peruse particular portions of the U. S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs' report,

with the several agents' reports and many interesting tabulated statements appended thereto, for 1883, ("Washington Government Printing Office, 5510, Ind."), he would perhaps attain the conviction of the undersigned, that in the United States the "Indian problem" is in process of speedy and satisfactory adjustment, with the bright end in view of qualifying the native races for citizenship.

Not but that, in the United States grave difficulties have yet to be surmounted. These are, however, being firmly and judiciously grappled with, and that, by an ever increasing body of zealous, philanthropic men, the Indian Agents and Teachers. The annual reports of these gentlemen evince earnestness to suggest improvement, as well as courage boldly to complain of neglect, or ill-judged economies, such as, —amongst other things— the reduction of lay teachers' salaries, who, more valuable, when experienced, are thus induced to resign, in that blessed country, in which, as in our own, every one willing to work can find something to do.

The principal religious bodies of the Union contribute in whole, or in part, to instruction in Christianity on the various reservations; and the agents of most experience and success, maintain that religious teaching is a prime necessity for the elevation of the Indian.

That land, to Indians in severalty, should for a long period of years be inalienable, except to another Indian, seems to be the general opinion on the reservations: The granting of land to them will hasten improvement.

Last September, having visited several reservations on the "American Side," I conclude with brief reports of progress; regretting much that your limited

space will not admit of fuller notices, where everything seems so prosperous and advancing for the Red man :

YAKIMA RESERVATION.

The Yakima reservation, consisting of 800,000 acres, one third of which is cultivatable and the remainder timbered and grassy mountain land, was, after the Indian outbreak of 1855-6, granted to certain equestrian tribes east of the Cascade Mountains, who had revolted against the authority of the United States in consequence of the utter inadequacy of reservations first allotted to them. Ruined and utterly impoverished by the war, they were, on submitting to the military in 1856, at once rationed. Continuing in miserable plight, however, until 1863, they were that year placed on the reservation above-named, in charge of an excellent agent, the Rev. J. H. Wilbur, who labored amongst them with success for about twenty years.

Having at Vancouver, Columbia River, in 1836, and at Nisqually, later, known prominent members of the tribes under Mr. Wilbur, I inquired of him in 1875 as to progress. His reply was so satisfactory that I sent a copy of it to Premier Mackenzie at Ottawa, when urging on him more attention to the needs of the British Columbia Indians. If I mistake not, a copy of Mr. Wilbur's letter has also gone to our present Dominion Premier, whom I have often by letter vainly importuned on various points in British Columbia's "Indian problem."

Mr. Wilbur has latterly been succeeded at the Yakima agency by Gen. R. H. Milroy, a distinguished soldier during secession troubles and who, in 1872, was a superintending agent on Puget Sound, so he has had experience. At Yakima there is an Indian

judiciary and police force, with county commissioners also for the three districts, into which the reserve has by Gen. Milroy been divided.

By the census of 1880, there were belonging to the Yakima reservation about 3,400 Indians, but they were not all on it, some preferring an idle, wandering, vicious life. The general rightly recommends military coercion to check this evil, (as such Indians are but children of a larger growth). That, in the United States on the Pacific, is now quite practicable. Of

THE INDUSTRIAL BOARDING SCHOOL

General Milroy says in his report of August 1883:

"This is the mill or course through which our Indians must reach civilization. Adult Indians, with their habits, prejudices, and superstitions fixed, like full-grown trees, can be but little changed by culture. It is wholly different with minor Indians. With them it is a truism that 'just as the twig is bent the tree is inclined.' Indian children can learn and absorb nothing from their ignorant parents but barbarism. Hence the vast importance of detaching them from their parents as soon as they reach school age and placing them in industrial boarding schools under the charge of energetic Christian teachers and instructors to take the place of parents, and by them to be trained up during the formative periods of their lives, into civilized habits and industries. *Too much importance cannot be attached to industrial boarding schools among Indians.* Upon the efficiency of teachers in these schools depends the progress of Indian civilization." These are weighty words. Mr. Milroy on

INDIAN POLICE,

Says: "I have found the Indian police here very prompt and efficient in the discharge of their duties, and a great power for good and the restraint of evil. I frequently have to send them outside the reservation, sometimes as much as a hundred miles, to make arrests, recover stolen property, etc., and so far they have always been successful in the performance of their required duties, without interference from the whites. When ordered outside the reservation,

in the performance of any duty, I always give them a written order, stating the duty to be performed, and requesting white men not to interfere, but to assist them, when necessary, and convenient."

For the year ending June 30, 1883, the total governmental expenditure for Yakima Reservation was \$6,095.54. Many Indian farmers on the Yakima, have produce for sale, as have men on Puyallup, W. T., and Grande Ronde, Or., reservations. These *latter* places I visited lately, but at an unfavorable season; nearly all young and old of both sexes being absent, earning wages in the hop-field.

Before getting to the great Indian training school, at Forest Grove, Or., which cannot be omitted, I must mention that at the Skokomish reservation, the scholars are, in the department of music, claimed by Mr. Edwin Eels, to be in advance of those of any other school by himself supervised:—"A number of the girls are quite competent to play the organ in church, and for the Sunday School." Skokomish school is also a boarding and industrial one, as is Puyallup, where Mr. Eels resides.

The site of the town of Forest Grove, (Washington Co., Oregon), near the base of Oregon's lofty range of coast hills, here and there meriting the appellation of mountain peaks, is picturesque, elevated and salubrious, away from the malaria of the large *river* valleys. Its position, morally, is also beautiful.

Within its precincts, alcohol for sale in any of its multifarious disguises is not permitted.

Near to the Indian Training School, in Forest Grove, is the Pacific University, founded and conducted by congregationalists, and if I am not mistaken, the oldest institution of the kind in the State.

Here the *elite* of the youth of Oregon, either finish their education, (Some eminent Oregonians have done so), or go east for deeper drinkings of "the Pierian Spring" of knowledge, so vastly enlarged since the renowned poet unwisely warned men against scrump tastings of it.

To the Caucasian, and to the Indian *alumni* at the

Grove, I had the satisfaction, on request, of extemporizing, severally, a few earnest words of exhortation to well-doing.

During the recent boom at Tacoma, three young Indian carpenters commencing at Puyallup, and finishing at the Grove, took, in Tacoma, contracts for house-building, found their material and gave satisfaction. The bright intelligence of educated young Indians, met during my recent trip, is in striking contrast to the manner of the ordinary Indian. In 1866 at Metlakatla, I first noticed this difference.

It would be improper to close without gratefully acknowledging the kindness, and readiness to give information, invariably met with at Forest Grove, and at the Indian Reservations visited. Forest Grove training school is the pinnacle and "bright particular star" of the whole arrangement. May Canada, with a good record, east of the Rockies, very soon emulate on the Pacific, her elder sister Columbia's excellent work for Indians in the extreme West.

WM. FRASER TOLMIE.

It may interest those concerned about Indian progress to learn the salaries paid at Forest Grove. The mark x designates Indian functionaries :—

	Per Annum
Superintendent.....	\$ 1500
Clerk.....	1200
Head Teacher and Physician (in one)	1200
Assistant Teacher.....	600
Blacksmith and Farmer (in one).....	900
Shoemaker.....	900
Carpenter and Wagon Maker (in one).....	900
Disciplinarian.....	900x
Matron.....	700
Assistant Matron.....	600
Tailoress.....	600
Seamstress.....	420
Head Cook.....	540x
Laundress.....	360x
Laundryman.....	360x
Six Cadet-serjeants @ \$60.....	360x

1875. I have been thinking of you
much lately, and wondering how you
are getting on. I hope you are
well and happy. I have been
very busy lately, but I have
managed to find some time to
write to you. I have been
thinking of you very much, and
wondering how you are getting on.
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